

Appl. No. 10/814,086
Amdt. Dated December 5, 2006
Reply to Office Action of September 5, 2006

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

Claim 1 (Currently amended): A locking device for vertical connection of an upper connection component, that comprises an upper engaging section, to a lower connection component, that comprises a lower engaging section, the locking device comprising at least two shell segments (1) each of which only partially extends around opposite vertical sides of the connection from the outside and in a horizontal direction, with the shell segments (1) comprising upper and a lower terminal axial edges (5, 6) at each respective end adjacent to each of which are is provided upper and a lower engaging sections (7, 8) facing upper and lower engaging sections (13, 14) of the upper and lower connection components so that, should the connection of the two connection components come apart, the upper engaging section (7) of the shell segments (1) is supported against the upper engaging sections (13, 14) provided at the upper connection component, while the lower engaging section (8) of the shell segments (1) holds the lower engaging sections (13, 14) of the lower connection ~~component.~~ component, said locking device further comprising upper and a lower washer (9, 29) each being assembled of at least first and second washer segments (11, 12), the washers (9, 29) being configured so that each can be pushed onto the

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connection from the outside and in horizontal direction, whereby, when installed, the upper washer (9) is fixed to the upper connection component and the lower washer (29) to the lower connection component, whereby the upper and lower engaging sections (13, 14) are each formed on the respective washer segments (11, 12).

Claim 2 (Canceled)

Claim 3 (Previously presented): A locking device according to Claim 1, wherein the shell segments (1) are connected to each other in an installed state.

Claim 4 (Previously presented): A locking device according to Claim 1, wherein the engaging sections (7, 8) of each shell segment (1) are each formed by a projection that is bent from the upper or lower terminal axial edge (5, 6) at an essentially right angle.

Claim 5 (Previously presented): A locking device according to Claim 2, wherein the engaging section (13, 14) of each washer segment (11, 12) is formed by a projection protruding from the outer perimeter of said washer segment.

Claim 6 (Previously presented): A locking device according to Claim 5, wherein the projection protruding from the outer perimeter is stepped.

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Claim 7 (Previously presented): A locking device according to Claim 1, wherein the engaging sections (7, 8) of each shell segment (1) extend along the entire upper or lower terminal axial edge (5, 6).

Claim 8 (Previously presented): A locking device according to Claim 5, wherein the engaging section (13, 14) of each washer segment (11, 12) extends along the entire outer perimeter.

Claim 9 (Previously presented): A ceiling-mounted medical supply unit having a locking device for vertical connection of an upper connection component which locking device comprises an upper engaging section, to a lower connection component, that comprises a lower engaging section, the locking device comprising at least two shell segments (1) each of which only partially extends around opposite vertical sides of the connection from the outside and in a horizontal direction, with the shell segments (1) comprising an upper and a lower axial edge (5, 6) at each respective end adjacent to each of which is provided an upper and a lower engaging section (7, 8) facing upper and lower engaging sections (13, 14) of the upper and lower connection components so that, should the connection of the two connection components come apart, the upper engaging section (7) of the shell segments (1) is supported against the upper engaging sections (13, 14) provided at the upper connection component, while the lower

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engaging section (8) of the shell segments (1) holds the lower engaging sections (13, 14) of the lower connection component.

Claim 10 (Previously presented): A ceiling-mounted medical supply unit according to Claim 9, further comprising an upper and a lower washer (9) each being assembled of at least first and second washer segments (11, 12), the washers (9) being configured so that each can be pushed onto the connection from the outside and in horizontal direction, whereby, when installed, the upper washer (9) is fixed to the upper connection component and the lower washer (29) to the lower connection component, whereby the upper and lower engaging sections (13, 14) are each formed on the respective washer segments (11, 12).

Claim 11 (Previously presented): A ceiling-mounted medical supply unit according to Claim 9, wherein the shell segments (1) are connected to each other in an installed state.

Claim 12 (Previously presented): A ceiling-mounted medical supply unit according to Claim 9, wherein the engaging sections (7, 8) of each shell segment (1) are each formed by a projection that is bent from the upper or lower axial edge (5, 6) at an essentially right angle.

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Claim 13 (Previously presented): A ceiling-mounted medical supply unit according to Claim 10, wherein the engaging section (13, 14) of each washer segment (11, 12) is formed by a projection protruding from the outer perimeter of said washer segment.

Claim 14 (Previously presented): A ceiling-mounted medical supply unit according to Claim 13, wherein the projection protruding from the outer perimeter is stepped.

Claim 15 (Previously presented): A ceiling-mounted medical supply unit according to Claim 9, wherein the engaging sections (7, 8) of each shell segment (1) extend along the entire upper or lower axial edge (5, 6).

Claim 16 (Previously presented): A ceiling-mounted medical supply unit according to Claim 13, wherein the engaging section (13, 14) of each washer segment (11, 12) extends along the entire outer perimeter.

Claim 17 (Previously presented): A ceiling-mounted medical supply unit according to Claim 9, wherein an axial passageway is provided within the locking device for routing supply lines therethrough.